

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-11, which were all of the then pending claims, under 35 U.S.C. §102 as being fully anticipated by U.S. patent 5,862,325 (Reed, et al.). The Examiner also asked that the specification be checked for minor errors.

Independent Claims 1, 3, 4, 8 and 10 are being amended to better define the subject matters of these claims, and new Claims 12-14, which are all dependent from Claim 4, are being added to describe preferred features of the invention.

In addition, this opportunity is being taken to correct several minor errors in the specification, care being taken to avoid adding new material, and to update the references to the copending applications listed on page 1 of the application.

For the reasons discussed below, Claims 1-14 patentably distinguish over the prior art and are allowable. The Examiner is thus asked to reconsider and to withdraw the rejection of Claims 1-11 and to allow these claims and new Claims 12-14.

The present invention relates to methods and systems for managing and applying business rules for data used in computer applications. The invention provides a mechanism to isolate and externalize the definition of these business rules. In this way, the rules can be modified without the need to recompile and reinstall the application.

Reed, et al. discloses a communications system that coordinates the transfer of data, metadata and instructions between databases. In the Office Action, the Examiner specifically cited column 13, line 51 to column 14, line 10 of Reed, et al, which discloses that receipt and storage of new or updated information can trigger other action.

There is a very important general difference between this invention and the procedure and system shown in Reed, et al. This difference is that, while Reed, et al. may use rules, the present invention is specifically directed to establishing and changing rules in a certain way.

This general difference is reflected in a number of more specific differences between the present invention and Reed, et al. For example, Reed, et al. does not disclose or suggest providing a trigger for a business rule that is used to determine the validity of data in a computer application. This is the specific type of rule that is the subject of the present application.

It is noted, as mentioned above, that Reed, et al. discloses a trigger. This, though, is used to trigger certain actions, not to trigger a rule of the type defined above.

The above-discussed feature of the present invention is of utility because, as explained in detail in the present application, it facilitates separating the rules and the trigger conditions from the application or applications with which they are being used. This, in turn, allows the rules and the trigger conditions to be changed without requiring any changes to those applications.

The other references of record have been reviewed, and it is believed that these other references are no more pertinent than Reed, et al. Specifically, these other references,

whether they are considered individually or in combination do not disclose or suggest this use of triggers for the above defined type of rules

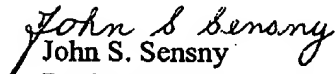
Independent Claims 1, 3, 4, 8 and 10 clearly describe this feature of the invention. In particular, each of these claims describes the rules as determining the validity of data in an associated defined computer application. Each of these claims also indicates that each rule includes a predetermined trigger condition, or that a predetermined trigger condition is identified for the rule. Claims 1 and 4 include the feature of processing or implementing the rule if the trigger condition is satisfied. Claim 3 includes the similar feature that, if the trigger condition is partially satisfied, a method is invoked to determine a final result of the rule.

Claim 8, which is directed to a system for managing business rules, includes means for implementing the process of each rule if the trigger condition for the rule is satisfied, and Claim 10, which is directed to a program storage device, includes analogous method limitations.

Because of the above-discussed differences between Claims 1, 3, 4, 8 and 10 and the prior art, and because of the advantages associated with these differences, Claims 1, 3, 4, 8 and 10 patentably distinguish over the prior art and are allowable. Claim 2 is dependent from Claim 1 and is allowable therewith, and Claims 5-7 and 12-14 are dependent from Claim 4 and are allowable therewith. Likewise, Claims 9 and 11 are dependent from, and are allowable with, Claims 8 and 10 respectively. Consequently, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and to withdraw the rejection of Claims 1-11 and to allow Claims 1-14.

Every effort has been made to place this case in condition for allowance, a notice of which is requested. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference with Applicants' Attorneys would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is asked to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,


John S. Sensny
Registration No. 28,757
Attorney for Applicant

Scully, Scott, Murphy & Presser
400 Garden City Plaza
Garden City, New York 11530
(516) 742-4343

JSS:jy